Powers to censor TV programmes

2297. SHRI RUMANDLA RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether her Ministry has the powers to censor TV programmes if it goes against the national interest;

(b) if so, whether Section 20 of Cable Television (Regulation) Act proposes to prevent the operation of any cable television in public interest;

(c) if so, the main provisions that had been made applicable to her Ministry in this regard; and

(d) to what extent it will be helpful in checking the private TV programmes?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) to (c) Section 20 of the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 empowers the Central Government:—

(i) to prohibit the operation of any cable television network in such areas as notified, if considered necessary or expedient in public interest;

(ii) to regulate or prohibit the transmission or re-transmission of any channel or programme, if considered necessary or expedient in the interest of —
i) sovereignty or integrity of India; or
ii) security of India; or
iii) friendly relations of India with any foreign State; or
iv) public order, decency or morality.

(iii) to regulate or prohibit the transmission or re-transmission of any programme of any channel which is not in conformity with the prescribed programme or advertisement codes.

(d) These provisions empower the Central Government to regulate all programmes, including those of private TV, when transmitted

through cable, for violation of the prescribed codes or for going against the interests of sovereignty or security of the country etc.

Undue benefit to M/s Nalini Singh Associates

2298. SHRI H.K. JAVARE GOWDA: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that M/s Nalini Singh Associates received undue benefit to the tune of Rs. 9.96 crore from Doordarshan between 1996 and May, 2000 according to CAG Report;

(b) if so, the details of the misuse and loss caused to the exchequer; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken against the persons who are involved in the scam?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) The C&AG in its report for the year ended March, 2000 had observed that Doordarshan did not apply the commercial rates in accordance with the then prevalent Rate Card in respect of news based programmes 'Aankhon Dekhi' and 'Dopahar Aankhon Dekhi', thereby giving an undue benefit of Rs. 9.96 crores to the producer of these programmes.

(b) and (c) The observations of C&AG on the subject are under examination.

Effective and speedy justice

2299. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a group of law firms called the Society of Indian Law Firms (SILF) has recently submitted a five-point charter for faster and fairer justice for all highlighting the inadequacies of the present legal system and steps required for delivering effective and speedy justice; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the action taken/proposed to be taken thereon?